Gratis Charis

Thru them God shows his Kindness

God's Thorns.

Job 1:10 Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on evy side? Thou hast blest the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the landd,

How much easier it would be to intrepret the Bible if there were no contradictions in it, if it always agreed with itself.

Those who love the Bible best are most disturbed about the contrary ideas concerning the same subject. Both contrary things cannot be true, yet they are both in the Bible and we believe that the Bible is true. Is there any way out of our dilemma?

Here is a reasonable suggestion.

When you find two men in the Bible disagreeing about the same idea, follow the thot expressed by the bet better man, just as you do in life.

Wise men and fools, widked and good, old and young speak thru the Scriptures. The truth in the Bible is shown forth against a background of error. Consequently it is folly to say,"This statement is true because it is in the Bible". One Bible verse boldly says,"There is no God"! But of course it was a fool who said it. The apostle John said,"God is love". I would rather thake the word of a man like John than the word of a fool.

But sometimes the same man says contrary things, then what? The same rule holds. Every man has his ups and downs, his best moments and his worst. Take every man at his best, not at his worst. In a moment of weakness Jesus said,"My God, My God, why hast thou fo forsaken me?". Compare these words with,"It is finishe I have overcome the world!

Take our text, i.e.

The hedge of thorns, homming in the man on all sides. Thorns a prevailing simile in the Bible denoting pain, annoyances, hindrances, limitations, tc. All these are God' brambles. And to this symbol of reality different men react in different ways.

Some men writhein bitterness at the thot of pain. The thorn of life are the cruel tricks of a hartless fate.

Others speak of God's thorns as an ultimate expression of his kindness, the wise provision of a thotful Father. Thru them God shows his kindest love.

Which point of view shall we take? Following the rule we laid down, what do we discover?

We discover that the real achievers in the world, the great spirits, the true men, accept God's discipline as a part of His kindness; and on the other hand, the coward hearts, the mean souls, the shriveled personalities, complain the loudest against the thorns of life.

God surely does put a hedge about our lives. You may fuss and fume against the limitations all you please, but there stands the hedge and for a good purpose.

You may conclude that God is trying to hedge you in, or you may conclude that God is trying to keep evil away from, but there stands the hedge.

If you break thru to your freedom the thorns will tear your clothes and flesh, and when once thru, you may discover, only after it is too late, that ~~X~~ God's hedge of thorns no longer protects you against the onslaughts of your enemies.

Surely you have been tempted to do a wrong act and suddenly some thot or hymn of Bible verse or advice someone ~~g~~ once gave you arose before you to warn you in time.

The row of ropes or lashes above railroad trakks at given places- before bridges and tunnels. The trainmen on top of cars would be lashed by thes hanging ropes as the train went by, then would suddenly drop in time to escape being struck to death by the trestle or arch of tunnel.

Suppose a breakman, feeling the sting of the lash, should grumble and refuse to stoop down? Suppose he stood there and swore because of the lashing?

God has his lashes and they are meant for kindly warnings.

In the public square at Enterprise, Alabama stands a fountain on which is inscribed,

"In profound appreciation of the
Boll Weevil
And what it has done as the herald of
Prosperity
This monument is erected
by the
Citizens of Enterprise
Coffee County, Alabama.

A strange inscription to such a scourge as the Boll Weevil! But to the people of Enterprise it was a blessing in dusguise. Otherwise they never would have broken way from their custom of the one-crop system which in time exhausts the soil. The whole south was taught a valuable lesson by the Boll Weevil.

"Disappointment is often His-appointment".

The mother eagle dumping her eaglets out of the nest, compelling them to fly. Cruelty. But see how she follows and then when they tire, flies beneath them and lets them rest on her own sturdy back!

Like Paul we may well learn to glory in our tribulations knowing well that God is intending them for our good.

My swollen, throbbingnose. The doctor lanced it.
Relief!

"Are we weak and heavy laden?
Is there trouble anywhere

WHAT a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Every thing to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Every thing to God in prayer!

2 Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful,
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

3 Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge,—
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer;
In his arms he'll take and shield thee:
Thou wilt find a solace there.

UNKNOWN.

If thou wouldst my disciple be,
Deny thyself, the world forsake,
And humbly follow after me,

2 Take up thy cross; let not its weight
Fill thy weak spirit with alarm;
His strength shall bear thy spirit up,
And brace thy heart, and nerve thine arm.

3 Take up thy cross, nor heed the shame;
Nor let thy foolish pride rebel;
Thy Lord for thee the cross endured,
To save thy soul from death and hell.

4 Take up thy cross, and follow Christ,
Nor think till death to lay it down;
For only he who bears the cross,
May hope to wear the glorious crown.

CHARLES WILLIAM EVEREST. 1833.

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BE still, my heart! these anxious cares
To thee are burdens, thorns, and snares;
They cast dishonor on the Lord,
And contradict his gracious word.

2 Brought safely by his hand thus far,
Why wilt thou now give place to fear?
How canst thou want, if he provide,
Or lose thy way with such a guide?